

Chester

Diocesan News

September 2017

News, features, jobs...
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Growing stronger parishes

Sunday School Fun Science

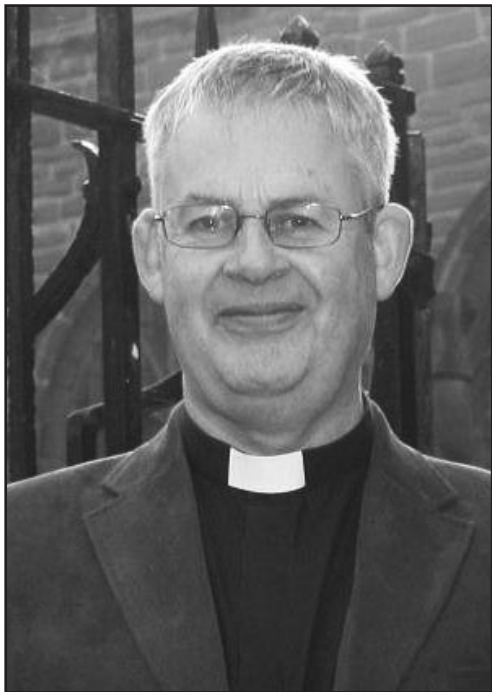
St Bartholomew's Sunday school, in Great Barrow, ended the term with a bang at their annual summer party. This year, in addition to reflecting on God's love, Cheshire Fun Science provided a fun filled

afternoon complete with slime making, explosions and creating blue candy floss. The children all had a fantastic time and particularly enjoyed competing as to who could launch the highest rocket.



An Extended Family

After exactly 15 years as senior priest of the Diocese, I reflect in this final newsletter article on what I think it means to be on a Christian journey of faith together.



The Outward Journey

The Diocese is an extended family. What extension means is this : enlarging the circles of love and care around us, to include more and more people.

Jesus had an extended idea of family, beyond his own relatives. Paul developed the extension theme when he emphasised adoption, speaking of Christ's salvation as available for all, without exclusive boundaries of any kind.

Therefore, we should be breaking down any barriers that divide us from others, and certainly not erecting barriers to exclude people we seek to reject.

If we enlarge the circles of love and care around us, we engage in new relationships, and through them may discover more about our own identity as persons, and may even encounter God too. The outward journey of faith is about doing, in response to promptings of the Holy Spirit.

The Inward Journey

It was Mother Teresa of Calcutta who said that a family who prays together stays together. In any family there are differences and disagreements, including the family of the Diocese, and the bigger family of the Church of God. But what keeps us together is the life of prayer which we share, the life-blood of our faith.

Prayer takes us on a journey inward, into the depths of the mystery of God. It may begin with wordy intercessions for the pain of our World, but it may end in a silent encounter with the divine Presence, beyond words. The inward journey of faith is about Being, guided by the Holy Spirit, which is the Spirit of Jesus.

At the Foot of the Cross

The outward journey of love, and the inward journey of prayer, are not mutually exclusive. They are complementary. Both are essential for a balanced Christian life. The two journeys come together in Jesus Christ, who embraced the World while in communion with God the Father. They come to a focus on the Cross of Christ, where our faith itself is centred.

Again and again we forget that our proper place as Christians is standing at the foot of the Cross together, which is both the beginning and the end of all our journeying. May God bless you, and keep you in the faith.

**The Very Revd Professor
Gordon McPhate
Dean of Chester**

Cycling helps 'Cana Girls' & Syrians



On Saturday 1st July, Canon John rode the restored 'Flying Gate', accompanied by his daughter Ruth Kililiku, on a 40 mile pilgrimage to Chester Cathedral and back to West Kirby. This was Canon John's 13th annual cycling pilgrimage.

While at the Cathedral a service took place celebrating the work of the Barnabas Trust which supports the work of Cana Girls Rescue Home. Thanks were also given for the very generous friends and churches that last year provided £19,000.

Canon John said; "The donations help support 70 Kenyan girls who live in the Cana Girls Rescue Home. They have been rescued from F.G.M. and other vile inhuman acts. Having rescued the girls, the Vicar and his team need, with our help, to maintain and educate them." Should you wish to help donation cheques should be made out to 'Barnabas Fund' and sent c/o Canon John Bowers. 2, Shalford Grove, West Kirby CH48 9XY. For further information please call 0151 625 4831.

Sponsor a tree

This year St George's Church in Stockport is holding its annual Christmas Tree Festival from 29 November to 3 December. The event consistently attracts thousands of visitors and features over 70 trees. Tree sponsors range from individuals or families to organisations such as churches, other charities, clubs and businesses. Anyone who would like to sponsor a tree should contact Kim Regan on 0161 440 0408 or at d.kim.regan@gmail.com

Chester Diocesan News

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DISTRIBUTION: phone **Inprint Colour** on **01270 251589** and ask for Mark Heywood.

Chester Diocesan Board of Finance is a company limited by guarantee, registered in England (no. 7826) and a registered charity (no. 248968).



A warm welcome

Set within 70 acres of mature woodland, just outside Frodsham, Foxhill offers peace and space for relaxation, reflection and renewal. Whether you plan to stay for the day or a little longer, we hope our varied programme will meet your needs. Can't make the dates? We welcome guests for personal time and space away from the busyness of life. Please get in touch to check our availability.

How to Book

For more information and bookings email: foxhill@chester.anglican.org or call 01928 733777 www.foxhillchester.co.uk

Stop Look and Listen Days

These mini retreats are a chance to step back from your busyness, and listen to what God is saying to you. Each day starts with coffee at 9.30am and ends with tea at 3.30pm. £21 per person which includes lunch and refreshments.

- Monday 11th September-Hosted by the Revd. Jenny Bridgman - Associate Vicar of Timperley.
- Monday 9th October-Hosted by Molly Dow
- Monday 13th November-Hosted by The Revd Dr. Rob Munro - Vicar of Cheadle St. Mary
- Monday 11th December-Hosted by the Revd. Jonathon Green – Director of Foxhill House.

A Day to Get Away...

Mindfulness of God and Personal Transformation

Saturday 23rd September 10am - 4pm
£27.50 Includes lunch and refreshments.
Hosted by Shaun Lambert. The day is suitable for anyone who wishes to explore this further as well as understand something about mindfulness for health from a Christian perspective.

Fascination of St. Francis

Thursday 5th October 9.30am - 3.30pm
£27.50 Includes lunch and refreshments
Hosted by Revd. Pamela Soult. The day will include times of quiet reflection and opportunities to enjoy the grounds, before concluding with prayer.

Residential... (£145 per person - includes ensuite room, all meals and refreshments)

Thriving through Change

Wednesday 1st November 1pm - Friday 3rd November 2pm

Hosted by Bishop Chris Edmondson. Using a variety of means including Biblical reflection, discussion, prayer ministry and personal space, Bishop Chris will show how we cannot just survive change, but thrive and grow in and through the process.

Coming to life in Advent

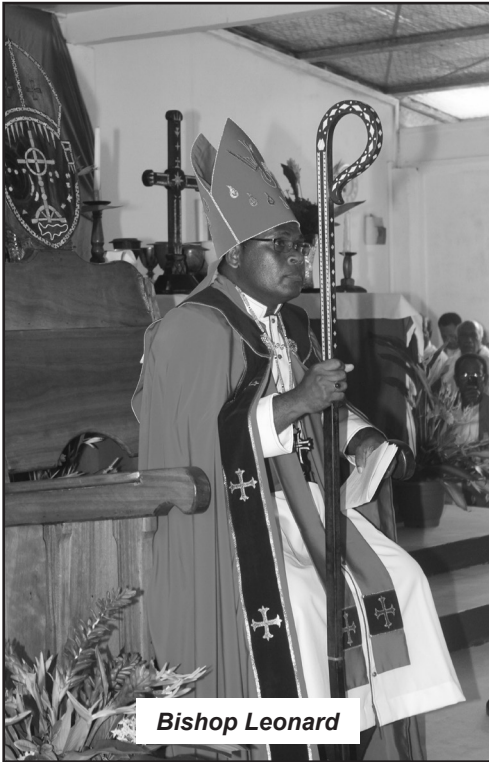
Friday 24th November 6pm - Sunday 26th November 2pm

Hosted by Bishop Libby Lane. Using poetry, music, and contemplative silence, this retreat draws on scripture and imagination to help us see ourselves and engage in our world afresh.

Foxhill House and Woodlands is the Diocese of Chester Centre for prayer, study and mission.



From Brother to Bishop



Bishop Leonard

Rev Jacky Wise, who went out to Melanesia five years ago, recently met up with Bishop Leonard from Melanesia. He is the first graduate from Chester University to become a Bishop and so Jacky interviewed him about his journey...

What an amazing journey. What are your feelings about it all now?

When you first start off as a brother you don't know what the future has in store for you. I was a very quiet and shy person but each time I encountered difficulties I saw opportunities opening up for me. When I first entered the Brotherhood I prayed to God and would say, "I believe you called me. Here I am".

Do you feel that coming to Chester was an important part of your calling?

I had a dream in 2007 and it was an important vision for me. When I came to Chester that was for me part of the fulfillment of that dream and then ten years later, in 2017, I was made a priest and I saw that as the complete fulfillment of that dream. It was a long journey.

Was the degree hard?

As a leaver from Form 3 I didn't think that it would be possible academically to go to university but with faith and trust in God I believed that I could do it. It was hard, especially settling into the new culture, and learning English well enough to manage in lectures.

When you were invited to become Bishop was that not part of that calling too?

Yes, right from when I was made a priest many people would say to me that I would not stay only as a priest but would be a bishop. And so I prayed and prayed to God not to let that happen to me! But I also prayed that if it was in his will, then I would become his mouthpiece and do this work for him.

And of course several people from the UK came to Melanesia for your consecration?

I was so thankful to Bishop Peter, from Chester Diocese, because as soon as he heard I was to be a bishop he said he would be there. I am very thankful that he preached at the service.

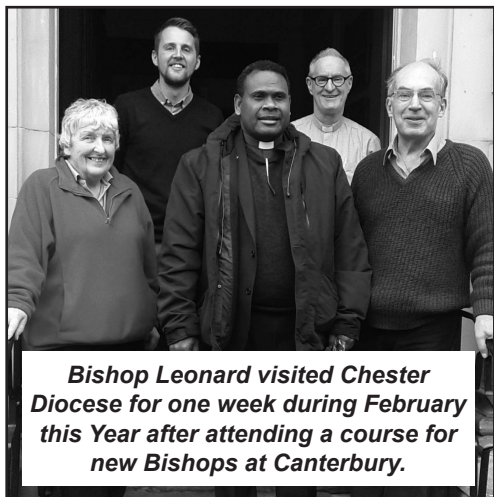
The prayerful life and rootedness in Christ is such a part of life in the Melanesian Brotherhood, but have there been other influences too?

The Brothers were of course the main influence but it was partly down to myself too. We all have a responsibility to look after our own calling. There are people who have a vocation who don't look after it. I prayed a lot for my vocation, to keep it alive.

It sounds like you will be a great encourager. Will that be part of your role in the future?

Yes, I've spoken to some people. In my Diocese I want our young people to join the priesthood and I have taken this message into schools. I say to them that if you want to follow what I do, and have courage and determination and confidence then you can follow my example. I want to see a prayerful diocese and a diocese that engages in mission. My background in mission and spirituality will help me to encourage my priests and my people to be a praying people. I only have a small background and God has chosen me and it is a heartfelt calling. I want this to rub off on all people and I am looking forward to doing that.

Bishop Peter's sermon from Bishop Leonard's consecration can be read at <https://tinyurl.com/y74v9nvm>



Bishop Leonard visited Chester Diocese for one week during February this Year after attending a course for new Bishops at Canterbury.

125th Anniversary Celebrations

The Parish Church of St Michael and All Angels, Runcorn is celebrating 125 years in the Community this year and are holding a Choral Evensong on Friday 29th September at 7pm. Bishop Peter will be preaching at the service. This is celebrating when the church was consecrated in 1892. The church is also holding a Flower Festival as part of the celebrations. This is to take place from Thursday 28th September to Sunday 1st October, Admission £3.00. Please see the church website for further details. www.runcornstmichaels.org.uk

Book of Common Prayer Competition

The Archbishop Cranmer Awards for the Diocese of Chester invites young people to read aloud short sections from the Book of Common Prayer. The aim is to introduce the young people to the beautiful language of the Prayer Book. There are two age groups; 11–14 and 15–18. Each competitor will receive a signed certificate of participation and a small medallion. The winner of each age group will receive a cash prize. The church or school the winner represents will be given a cash donation. The entrant who comes second in each age group will be given a smaller cash prize and there are runner up discretionary prizes. The competition for the Diocese of Chester will be held the Queen's School, Chester during the afternoon of Saturday, 18th November. Details can be found at www.pbs.org.uk/competitions--bursaries/the-cranmer-awards

Archbishop joins Birkenhead mission



The Archbishop of York, Dr John Sentamu, is to join the mission 'Believe in Birkenhead' which takes place in September. The Archbishop will be present from Thursday 7th to Sunday 10th September. He said; "I know you believe

in Birkenhead. God does too! Christians have worshipped in Birkenhead since the 12th century and we continue in that rich heritage, passing on the Good News of Jesus Christ from one generation to the next. Believe in Birkenhead will be a terrific weekend. We will proclaim the gospel as we worship, gather and eat together. We will be visiting schools and The Hive Youth Centre; listening to wonderful music; enjoying family and children's events at St James and St Oswald's and fun in Walker Park. There will be services in Christ Church, St Paul with St Luke and at St Saviour's. I encourage you all to come along and INVITE your family, friends and neighbours to join in. There is something for everyone and we'll hear how the love and life of Jesus Christ is for everyone. Come and believe in Birkenhead, believe in one another and, most of all, discover how God in Jesus Christ believes in you and loves you." Please pray for all involved.

Frank Field MP receives the Langton Award

Frank Field MP has received the Langton Award (named after Stephen Langton) for Community Service from the Archbishop of Canterbury.

Over 35 people from around the world were recognised with awards for outstanding service to the church in a ceremony held at Lambeth Palace.

Archbishop Justin Welby presented the awards, which recognise outstanding service in different fields, including those of Archbishop Justin's ministry priorities: prayer and the Religious life; reconciliation; and evangelism and witness.

The present awards consist of three existing Lambeth Awards – the Lambeth

Cross, the Canterbury Cross and the Cross of St Augustine – and six new awards named after previous holders of the office of Archbishop of Canterbury. The awards enabled the Church to

show this recognition publicly even though recognition had not been sought by those receiving the awards.



Frank Field